

Amendments to the Claims

1 Claim 1 (currently amended): A method of tracking transfers of groups of animals with animal
2 passports, the method comprising:

3 creating an animal passport to represent a transfer of a first group of animals from a
4 transferor to a transferee at a location, the first group comprising at least two animals and the
5 location comprising at least one of a city and a state;

6 assigning a unique passport identifier to the created animal passport, thereby providing a
7 unique identifier for the transfer;

8 recording, for the created animal passport using a processor of a computer, the unique
9 passport identifier assigned to the passport, a count of the animals in the first group, the location,
10 descriptive information identifying the animals in the first group, an identification of the
11 transferor, and an identification of the transferee; and

12 repeating the creating, the assigning, and the recording for each of at least one subsequent
13 transfer of any of the animals in the first group as a subsequent group, wherein at least one
14 subsequent group contains different animals than the animals in the group of a next-preceding
15 transfer and the animal passport created [[for]] to represent each subsequent transfer also records
16 the unique passport identifier assigned to the animal passport created to represent the next-
17 preceding transfer of each of the ~~each most-recent previous transfer of those animals in the~~
18 subsequent group.

1 Claim 2 (previously presented): The method according to Claim 1, wherein each of the animal

2 passports is signed, by the transferor and the transferee who are parties to the transfer represented
3 by the signed animal passport, to certify the transfer.

1 Claim 3 (previously presented): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the recording uses a
2 repository that is maintained by a third party that is distinct from each transferor and each
3 transferee who are parties to any of the transfers.

1 Claim 4 (previously presented): The method according to Claim 1, further comprising using the
2 unique passport identifier assigned to each transfer of any selected one of the animals to track all
3 of the locations of the selected one of the animals.

1 Claim 5 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 1, wherein a first of the animal
2 passports is created for a first transfer following birth of the animals in the first group, and
3 wherein repeating the creating continues for each subsequent transfer until death of the animals in
4 a final subsequent [[the]] group, the created animal passports thereby reflecting a complete
5 lifetime of the animals in the final subsequent group and being usable to track all transfers of the
6 animals in the final subsequent group throughout their lifetime.

Claim 6 (canceled)

1 Claim 7 (original): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the transfers are transfers of

2 ownership.

1 Claim 8 (original): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the transfers are transfers of
2 possession.

1 Claim 9 (original): The method according to Claim 1, wherein at least one of the transfers is a
2 transfer of ownership and at least one of the transfers is a transfer of possession.

1 Claim 10 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the creating, the
2 assigning, and the recording are also repeated for subsequent transfers of animal products derived
3 from the animals in the [[group]] first and subsequent groups following slaughter of the animals in
4 the [[group]] first and subsequent groups.

1 Claim 11 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the descriptive
2 information identifying the animals in the [[group]] first and subsequent groups comprises
3 individual animal identifications of the animals.

1 Claim 12 (previously presented): The method according to Claim 1, wherein at least one
2 additional animal is included in one or more of the subsequent ~~transfers~~ groups, and wherein the
3 animal passport created for such subsequent transfers also records the unique passport identifier
4 assigned to ~~each most-recent previous~~ the animal passport created to represent the next-preceding

5 transfer of a group in which each of the at least one additional animal was previously transferred.

1 Claim 13 (previously presented): The method according to Claim 1, further comprising:

2 determining a country of origin for a selected animal using the unique passport identifier
3 associated with each passport representing any group in which the selected animal has been
4 transferred to determine, from the location recorded for each passport, all locations in which the
5 selected animal has been located throughout its lifetime.

1 Claim 14 (previously presented): The method according to Claim 1,

2 further comprising:

3 determining, for a selected one of the animals, all locations in which the selected
4 animal has been located throughout its lifetime using the location recorded for each animal
5 passport representing any group in which the selected animal has been transferred; and
6 preparing a country of origin claim for the selected animal, using the determined
7 locations, wherein the country of origin claim indicates whether the selected animal has been
8 located only in a selected country throughout the lifetime of the animal.

1 Claim 15 (previously presented): The method according to Claim 5, further comprising:

2 constructing a chain of transfers for a selected one of the animals using the unique
3 passport identifier assigned to an animal passport created to represent a transfer at death of the
4 selected one to determine the location of the transfer represented by the animal passport, and

5 iteratively determining each previous location of the selected one by using the unique passport
6 identifier recorded on the animal passport for the most-recent previous transfer to obtain the
7 animal passport created to represent each previous transfer of the selected one, until reaching the
8 first of unique passport identifiers recorded on the animal passports associated with the first
9 transfer of the selected one, thereby determining all locations in which the selected one has been
10 located throughout its lifetime; and

11 verifying a country of origin claim for the selected one by comparing the determined
12 locations to one or more locations stated in the country of origin claim.

Claims 16 - 20 (canceled)

1 Claim 21 (currently amended): A method of providing country of origin claims, the method
2 comprising:

3 completing, for every transfer of groups of animals from transferors to transferees, each
4 group comprising at least two animals, a passport document to represent the transfer, wherein:

5 a first transfer of a first group of the animals is represented by a first passport
6 document;

7 for each subsequent transfer of any of the first group of animals, as a subsequent
8 group, the subsequent transfer is represented by a subsequent passport document, wherein at least
9 one subsequent group contains at least one animal different from the animals in the group of a
10 next-preceding transfer; and

each of the passport documents has associated therewith a unique passport identifier, thereby providing a unique identifier for the transfer; and [[,]]

further comprising:

specifying, on each of the passport-document documents, a count of the animals transferred, descriptive information for the animals transferred, and a location of the transfer, the location comprising at least one of a city and a state;

specifying, on the first passport document, the unique passport identifier associated therewith;

specifying, on [[the]] each subsequent passport document, the unique passport identifier associated therewith as well as the unique passport identifier associated with the next-preceding transfer of each ~~with any previous passport document completed to represent a previous transfer~~ of the animals transferred in the subsequent group; and

signing the passport document, by the transferor and the transferee, to certify the transfer;

recording, using a processor of a computer, each of the transfers in a repository maintained by a third party who is distinct from the transferors and the transferees, further comprising:

creating an entry in the repository for each of the transfers, each of the entries comprising the unique passport identifier associated with the passport document representing that transfer, the count of the animals transferred, the descriptive information for the animals transferred, the location of the transfer, and for the subsequent passport documents, each [[the]]

32 unique passport identifier ~~associated with~~ specified thereon for next-preceding transfers; any
33 ~~previous passport document completed to represent a previous transfer of the animals transferred;~~
34 and

35 using the entries in the repository to determine, for a selected one of the animals using the
36 processor of the computer, whether a country of origin claim can be made stating that the selected
37 one was always physically located, from its birth to its death, in a particular country by
38 comparing, in each of the entries that pertains to transferring the selected animal, the location to
39 the particular country.